



An Institute of Hope

UK Campaign for The Jonathan Sacks Institute



**British
Friends of**
Bar-Ilan University

Jonathan Sacks
THE RABBI SACKS LEGACY



Contents

Introduction	3
Rabbi Sacks & Bar-Ilan University	5
Why Do We Need This Institute?	6
Aims & Activities	7
Programme Activities	8-10
Impact	11
Gift Opportunities	12



Introduction

Next year, Bar-Ilan University will open The Jonathan Sacks Institute.

Reaching over 400 students a year, this ground-breaking Institute will bring together students, researchers and academics from different faiths, backgrounds and countries to learn from, and be inspired by, the remarkable work of Rabbi Sacks zt"l.

At a time when Israel's democracy is under threat, we need this Institute more than ever, giving us hope and inspiration to build a fairer, more inclusive Israel.

And where better than Bar-Ilan, one of Israel's most diverse university campuses. Here, Israeli Arab students will get to study Rabbi Sacks' ideas alongside ultra-orthodox students. Israeli researchers will discuss and debate Rabbi Sacks' ideas with academics around the world.

Indeed, the scale, reach and impact of this new Jonathan Sacks Institute is unprecedented. New undergraduate courses will be created, and postgraduate research

opportunities offered. There will be new publications, international seminars, conferences and annual prizes, all inspired by the life and work of Rabbi Sacks.

Due to open in October 2024, Bar-Ilan has already made a financial commitment to this Institute. But we still need to raise an additional £1.1 million to make this vision a reality.

Over the following pages you will learn more about The Jonathan Sacks Institute and discover ways in which you can help.

Thank you for your interest in this much needed Institute.

Max Dunbar
Executive Director
British Friends of
Bar-Ilan University



Joanna Benarroch
Chief Executive
The Rabbi Sacks
Legacy





"I am deeply moved that Bar-Ilan University is establishing an institute that will bear my husband's name. He was passionate about bridging the gap between traditional Jewish thought and contemporary societal issues, and this institute will continue that legacy.

I am grateful to Bar-Ilan University for providing a platform for Rabbi Sacks' teachings in Israel, which will continue to inspire future generations."

Lady Elaine Sacks



Rabbi Sacks & Bar-Ilan University

Rabbi Sacks was one of the leading public intellectuals in the world.

There have been many great rabbinical thinkers. What is exceptional about Rabbi Sacks is that he developed a body of thought deeply grounded in the Jewish religious tradition that speaks to the most important contemporary social, political and moral issues for Jews and non-Jews alike.

For many Jews, but also for many people of other religions or no religion, he was looked to as the foremost moral thinker of our age.

Bar-Ilan has a deep, enduring and unique bond with Rabbi Sacks. He was a member of Bar-Ilan's Board,

a recipient of an honorary doctorate and a regular speaker at the university. Just this year, Bar-Ilan staged an international conference dedicated to Rabbi Sacks.

The spirit that runs through Rabbi Sacks' work inspired the founders of Bar-Ilan's Political Studies department, Professors Daniel Elazar and Charles Liebman – both of whom Jonathan Sacks quotes extensively. This same spirit continues to drive the department today.

Given the university's mission is 'to combine cutting-edge scientific research with education steeped in Jewish values and social responsibility' it is fitting that Bar-Ilan will be the home of The Jonathan Sacks Institute.

"Rabbi Sacks' message is both timely and timeless, and, as such, serves to underline the importance of ensuring his legacy in the canon of great Jewish and Western thinkers."

Prof. Jonathan Rynhold, Academic Director, The Jonathan Sacks Institute



Why do we need this Institute?

Today, Israel's democracy is under threat.

Nationalism, fundamentalism and racism are outpacing liberalism, moderation, and respect for minorities.

Rabbi Sacks was deeply concerned with the threat to a free democratic society posed by rampant individualism on the one hand and religious extremism on the other. He argued that our ability to overcome these challenges depends on a civic culture that engages in debate with mutual respect and a moral ecology that provides hope and builds connections and trust between different communities.

Although Rabbi Sacks is less well known in Israel than in the English-speaking world, he offers a crucial perspective – a Jewish solution to the many problems posed by the “Clash of Civilizations” – that is sorely needed in Israel today.

A major objective of the new institute is to ensure Rabbi Sacks' ideas become at least as influential in the Jewish homeland as they are outside of it, helping strengthen Israeli democracy.

“Liberal democratic politics... makes space for difference. It recognises that within a complex society there are many divergent views, traditions and moral systems. It makes no claim to know which is true. All it seeks to do is ensure that those who have differing views are able to live peaceably and graciously together.” Rabbi Sacks, *Not in God's Name*, 2015

Aims & Activities

The Jonathan Sacks Institute has two core aims:

To ensure Rabbi Sacks' ideas receive the attention and recognition they deserve within academia, helping address many of the moral, social and political challenges faced in Israel and around the world.

To create new leaders through a diverse network of alumni who will make a meaningful impact on the future of Israeli, Jewish and world society, inspired and guided by Rabbi Sacks' vision.

A variety of activities will be delivered including new undergraduate courses, postgraduate research, publications, international conferences and an annual prize in Rabbi Sacks' name.

With such a range of activities, the Institute will be a creative, diverse and inclusive hub for everyone including Israeli Arab and ultra-orthodox undergraduates, postgraduate research students, writers, politicians, academics from around the world and members of the wider Israeli public.



Programme Activities

Foundation Courses

At any one time, over 20,000 students are studying at Bar-Ilan. All these students must take several foundation courses in Jewish Studies. The Institute will create new foundation courses grounded in Rabbi Sacks' writings. This will enable his ideas to gain widespread exposure across the university, reaching students who will not be familiar with Rabbi Sacks or his work.

One such course will be directly focused on Rabbi Sacks' writings. The other courses will relate to topics and issues that were central to his work. In each case, a significant part of the syllabus will include his writings on the subject. Some courses can be tailored for students in specific faculties. For example, a course on science and religion can be anchored by Rabbi Sacks' book *'The Great Partnership'* while also including other authors who have written on the topic from Jewish

and general perspectives, such as that by Prof. Nathan Aviezer from the Bar-Ilan's Physics department.

Around 400 students a year would take these courses. Furthermore, versions of these courses could be made available online for free in English and Hebrew, enabling us to reach an even wider audience.

BA Programme: Democracy, Citizenship & Leadership

The Institute will create a unique BA programme composed from two sources: works related to politics that Rabbi Sacks would have read, consulted, and quoted; and writings from Rabbi Sacks himself.

Through this multipronged approach, the programme seeks to not only expand the reach of Rabbi Sacks' own works, but also to cultivate the spirit of Rabbi Sacks' intellectual approach to social and political issues amongst its students.





More than any other contemporary religious thinker, Rabbi Sacks' profound legacy provides an intellectual and practical foundation for this programme. In *The Dignity of Difference* Rabbi Sacks stressed that interacting with communities of a different identity enriches the tradition to which we belong. In *The Home We Build Together* he lays the intellectual foundations for forging social cohesion for the common good. While in *Not in God's Name* he addresses religious extremism in both the Jewish and Islamic traditions.

To help strengthen Israeli democracy, this BA programme will create a cross-communal network of future leaders from diverse backgrounds. They will embody and advance values and ideas espoused by Rabbi Sacks, especially his conceptualisation of cross-communal cooperation.

Given the special role of Judaism at Bar-Ilan, the university is well placed to attract Haredi students and encourage meaningful interaction with other students. At the same time, the number of Israeli Arab students has increased dramatically at Bar-Ilan. Anecdotal evidence indicates conservative Israeli Arab families prefer to send their children to Bar-Ilan because of its respect for religious tradition and commitment to tolerance and diversity.

This programme will therefore reach out to Haredi and Israeli Arab students, creating future leaders from a network of culturally diverse alumni. Of the 18 spaces available on this programme, four will be offered to Israeli Arab students and four to Haredi.

MA & PhD Research Scholarships

The Institute will recruit outstanding postgraduate students who will inject Rabbi Sacks' ideas, perspective, and concerns into academic and intellectual discourse in Israel and expand their reach across the academic world.

Students will produce academic publications, post research findings online and create a network of Israeli academics and intellectuals - ensuring Rabbi Sacks' ideas receive the attention and recognition they deserve within academia.

With students of the highest academic excellence, research will focus on either the thought of Rabbi Sacks, be conducted in the spirit of his outlook, or address Rabbi Sacks' core concerns.

Bar-Ilan's department of Political Studies and the Faculty of Jewish Studies will receive four MA and PhD scholarships each year.



International Seminars & Conferences

Building on Rabbi Sacks' unique contribution to public discourse, academics from different countries and disciplines will come together eight times a year (over Zoom), culminating in an in-person annual conference.

Seminars will explore connections between Jewish religious tradition and academic writing on issues of contemporary social, economic and political significance. Each seminar will have a different theme relating to one of Rabbi Sacks' core concerns. The textual starting point for the seminar will be Rabbi Sacks' writings on the theme. For example, a workshop themed around the challenge of religious extremism in politics and society would begin with *Not in God's Name*; a workshop on identity politics would begin with *The Dignity of Difference* and *The Home We Build Together*.

Academics from a variety of countries, backgrounds, institutions and disciplines will participate in a particular year as and when their field of study is the one chosen as the annual theme. These disciplines would include Philosophy, Contemporary Jewry, Bible Studies, Economics, Sociology, Law, Psychology and Comparative Religion.

Visiting Lectureship

Rabbi Sacks stressed the importance of engaging with those with contrasting opinions from our own. A visiting lectureship represents an opportunity for just such an enriching engagement. A leading academic/intellectual will give a series of lectures/seminars over two weeks at Bar-Ilan. The series will engage with the thought and/or concerns of Rabbi Sacks.

Annual Prize

There will be an annual award ceremony for the book, article, podcast or video that makes a significant contribution to the public intellectual discourse in the spirit of Rabbi Sacks' values and outlook. In this way it is hoped to increase recognition of, and interest in, Rabbi Sacks legacy, especially within Israeli society.

The annual prize ceremony will serve as the annual meeting for the alumni of all Institute programmes. The award will be publicised with a guest speaker and the ceremony and accompanying lecture made available online, furthering wider recognition of Rabbi Sacks in Israel.

Impact

Your support will:

- 1 Introduce over 400 students a year to the life and works of Rabbi Sacks, inspiring them, as Israel's future leaders and innovators, to strengthen Israeli democracy
- 2 Bring together four Israeli Arab and four Haredi students a year to discuss, debate and find common ground through Rabbi Sacks' ideas and beliefs
- 3 Ensure Rabbi Sacks' ideas receive the attention and recognition they deserve within academia in Israel and around the world
- 4 Establish an alumni network of Israeli graduates inspired by Rabbi Sacks' vision and values to make a positive change to Israeli politics and society
- 5 Raise awareness of Rabbi Sacks in Israel, ensuring his ideas become at least as influential in the Jewish homeland as they are outside of it



Gift Opportunities

Capital

The Jonathan Sacks Institute seminar room (naming opportunity)	£150,000
--	----------

Academic Programmes

Sponsor of Foundation undergraduate courses, educating 400 students a year	£75,000
--	---------

Sponsor of BA undergraduate course, 'Democracy, Citizenship & Leadership' educating 18 students a year including four Israeli Arab and four Haredi students	£75,000
---	---------

Scholarships

Scholarship for an Israeli Arab student to study BA programme, 'Democracy, Citizenship & Leadership'	£12,000/yr (for 3 yrs)
--	------------------------

Scholarship for a Haredi student to study BA programme, 'Democracy, Citizenship & Leadership'	£12,000/yr (for 3 yrs)
---	------------------------

General scholarship for BA programme, 'Democracy, Citizenship & Leadership'	£12,000/yr (for 3 yrs)
---	------------------------

Research scholarship for PhD student	£25,000/yr (for 4 yrs)
--------------------------------------	------------------------

Research scholarship for MA student	£5,000/yr (for 2 yrs)
-------------------------------------	-----------------------

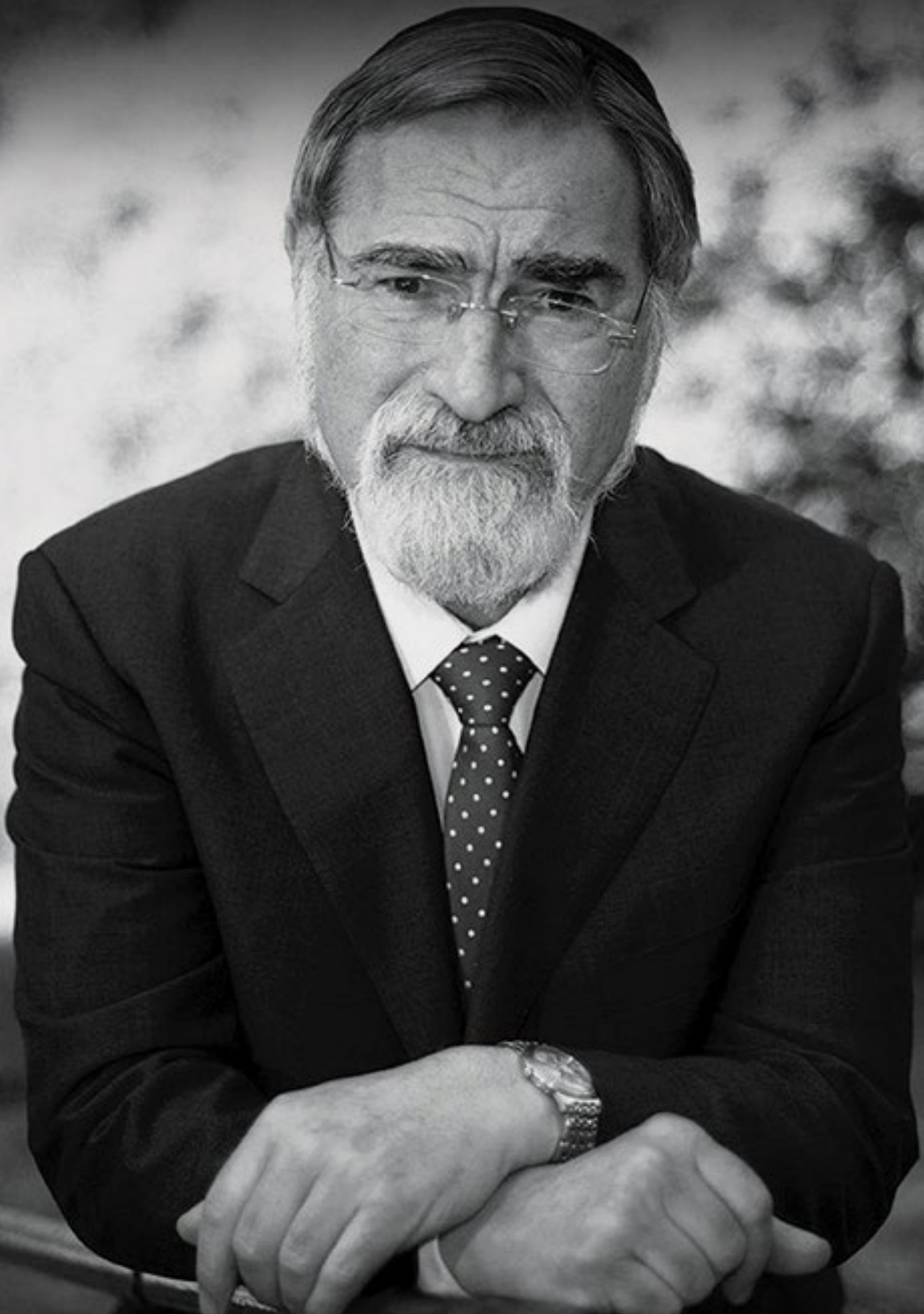
Events

International seminar	£10,000
-----------------------	---------

Visiting lecturer	£7,500
-------------------	--------

To discuss gift opportunities, please contact Max Dunbar, Executive Director, on 07985 388 457 or at max@bfbiu.org

Thank you for your interest and support



An Institute of Hope

UK Campaign for The Jonathan Sacks Institute



**British
Friends of**
Bar-Ilan University